

Dr. Ambedkar As The Member of Executive Governor General Council Questions and Answers

PART V

From 14th September 1942 to 12th April 1946

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Non-Supply of Stools to Lino-Machine Coolies

589. Seth Yuslif Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi) : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the coolies who are working Lino Machine, are not provided with stools and they have to keep standing throughout the day and that they submitted applications, but no attention has been paid to them ?

(b) Is it a fact that the work of Barmen is taken from the Coolies and that the posts of Barmen have been abolished ?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of removing these grievances of the coolies ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The coolies working Lino Type Machines do not really work standing. They are required to release obstructions in the distributor bar of the Lino machines, for which purpose they have to climb on Lino machines for attending to them. A stool would, therefore, be useless for the purpose of their duty. For resting Labourers usually sit on the floor.

(b) and (c). There are no posts of Barmen in the Government of India Presses and no such post ever existed in the New Delhi Press. The questions do not, therefore, arise.

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Labour Adviser to the Labour Department

627. Mr. K. S. Gupta : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if the post of Labour Adviser to the Labour Department is a new creation ? If so, why is it created ?

(b) If it is an already existing post, who was the last incumbent, and on what salary ?

(c) Is it a fact that Mr. B. L. Waters has been appointed Labour adviser to the Labour Department of the Central Government ? What is his salary and overseas allowance and allowances, if any ?

(d) Is it a war measure that necessitated the appointment of Mr. Waters ? What was he drawing as salary in the British Ministry of Labour and National Service ?

(e) Has he any previous experience of Indian conditions ? If so, under what Head of the Government of India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). The post of Labour

Adviser was created in December 1942. It was held by Mr. D. T. Jack till June 1943 and is now held by Mr. B. L. Waters. Mr. Jack's salary was Rs. 2,750 a month.

The Labour Adviser is to advise on all important matters of Labour legislation and administration, and in particular the manner in which Labour problems that are under consideration or which may arise, have been or are being dealt with in England.

(c) Yes. Mr. Waters draws a salary of Rs. 2,000 p.m. He is not paid any overseas or other monthly allowance.

(d) Yes. At the time of his appointment to his present post, Mr. Waters was drawing a salary of £880 in the scale of £850—30—1,000 per annum in the British Ministry of Labour and National Service. (e) No, Sir.

183

Want of Light in certain North Block Clerks' Lavatories

629. Sardar Sant Singh : (a) With reference to his answer to starred question No. 432, dated the 30th March, 1943, will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether he is aware that the clerks' lavatory adjacent to the officers' lavatory on the first floor of the North Block facing the north-western court-yard has been without a light for more than a year ?

(b) Is he aware that there is a clerks' lavatory facing the south-western inner court-yard of the North Block, the frontage of which is now closed due to formation of some rooms, and there is a narrow dark passage leading to this lavatory, and that this lavatory has hardly ever had a light during the last one year or more ?

(c) If an inspection is made of the other clerks' lavatories in the North Block, or in other buildings of the Government of India, is the Honourable Member aware that he will find mostly the same unsatisfactory state of affairs, although apparently the C.P.W.D. authorities have informed him that such is not the case?

(d) Is the Honourable Member prepared to pay surprise visits to some of these lavatories, without informing the C.P.W.D. authorities, say, once in six months or so, in order to judge the veracity of the statements made to him by the C.P.W.D. authorities ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a), (b) and (c). Yes, I am aware of the unsatisfactory state of lighting in some of the clerks' lavatories in the North Block of the Secretariat buildings. The position is as follows:

Electric bulbs are invariably provided in clerks' lavatories. Replacements are provided as usual and all possible means are adopted to ensure their safety. Despite the fact that locks are used, the bulbs are very often stolen. The records show that since October last about 48 bulbs with an equal number of bulb locks were replaced in six clerks lavatories in the North Block, out of which only 2 or 3 bulbs are intact while the rest have been stolen. In the ordinary course, only 15 to 16 bulbs should have been supplied during this

period on all points (taking the average life of a bulb at 1000 hours). As the provision of lamp locks has not prevented thefts, the Electrical Engineer is arranging to provide a special type of fittings to electric points in these lavatories. It is hoped that this arrangement will prevent thefts and improve lighting in the clerks' lavatories.

(d) In view of the measures that are now proposed to be taken, I do not consider surprise visits by me necessary.

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Lawns in front of Orthodox Clerks' Quarters in D.I.Z. Area, New Delhi

630. Sardar Sant Singh : (a) With reference to his answer to starred question No. 232, dated the 17th November, 1943, will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether he is aware that the C.P.W.D. Administration have supplied him with wrong information about the lawns in front of the orthodox clerks' quarters in the D.I.Z. Area of New Delhi ?

(b) If the reply to (a) be in the negative, is he prepared to inspect some of these lawns without taking any P.W.D. officials with him and find out the correctness or otherwise of the information supplied to this House through him by the C.P.W.D. Administration ?

(c) If the reply to part (b) be in the negative, will the Honourable Member please state:

(i) whether in every case beyond the outer wall of the quarters, there is a road on the other side of which the lawns begin;

(ii) whether it is a fact that the edge of these lawns runs parallel to the walls of the quarters, i.e., in a straight line as far as the quarters were built in a straight line or follows any turn, etc., but always running parallel, in a regular manner, to the walls of the quarters ; (iii) whether this straight alignment of the edges of the lawns is still maintained ; if so, the width of the said roads, *viz.*, between the quarters and the lawns, as originally fixed and laid on, and their width at the corners or in front of most of the quarters in the Baird Square, Havetock Square, etc.;

(iv) whether any officer of the C.P.W.D. himself visited all the squares, etc., in order to see the condition of the lawns ; if so, who was that officer; or whether the matter was left in the hands of some petty subordinates; and

(v) whether the Honourable member is prepared to issue instructions to the C.P.W.D. officers to inspect the places about which complaints are brought to light, personally and invite half a dozen or so tenants of each totality and find out their grievances, if any, taking their signatures on a report on the matters in question ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). No. I have no reason to believe that the information furnished to me was incorrect.

(c) (i) Yes, generally.

(ii) The lawns usually run parallel to the walls of quarters.

(iii) The alignment of the edges of the lawns is still maintained and the

width of paths is about 8 feet.

(iv) The Sub-Divisional officer goes round to see the lawns frequently and the Superintendent, Horticultural Operations, inspects them occasionally.

(v) Complaints, when made, are attended to by the C.P.W.D. officers and no special instructions appear to be necessary.

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Copyholders and Revisers passing Readers' Examination of Government of India Press, New Delhi

646. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some Copyholders and Revisers who passed the Readership Examination in the year 1942, in the third chance (grace chance), in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, were given to understand that if they would succeed in examination they would remain junior to all qualified men who passed in the first and second chances;

(b) whether the existing rule was in force in the month of May, 1942, when the examination was held in the Government of India Press, New Delhi ; and

(c) whether the rule regarding the promotion of qualified Copyholders and Readers is going to be amended very shortly in such a way that those men who passed the examination in the third chance are now going to be declared senior to all ; if so, why ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No.

(b) Yes.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to parts (d) and (f) of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi's starred question No. 231 and part (e) of Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury's question No. 501.

186

High-handedness of Landlords in Delhi

647. Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) if the attention of Government has been drawn to the article published in the Hindi weekly named *Vaishya Samachar* of Delhi under the heading " Delhi me Makandaron ki Nadirshahi " in its issue of the 12th March, 1944;

(b) if Government have ascertained that actually influential and rich houseowners, resort to such tyrannies as have been described in the article, in question, in alliance with the police officers;

(c) if it is a fact, that, as stated in the paper, the house rent in the Maliwars Mohalla in Old Delhi has gone so high as from Rs. 9 to Rs. 21/4/- ;

(d) if Government propose to get the allegations described in the paper required into, and to take suitable steps to stop the high handedness of the manner alleged with regard to the question of house rent in Old Delhi; and

(e) the difficulties in the way of Government in applying the same law to Old Delhi which regulates and controls the rent in New Delhi ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Enquiries are being made of the total authorities and a reply will be laid on the table of the House at an early date.

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Representation of Scheduled Castes in Food Department

648. Mr. Piare Lall Kureel : (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the communal representation including that of Scheduled Castes in the Gazetted and Non-Gazetted Staff of the Food Department and the Executive and Provincial organisations thereunder ?

(b) Are Government satisfied with the present representation of Scheduled Castes in the Food Department ? If not, what practical steps do they propose to take in order to secure their due representation in the said Department?

(c) Do Government propose to reduce the educational qualifications for the above Gazetted and Non-Gazetted posts in the case of Scheduled Castes ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava :

(a) I. Gazetted Posts :	
Europeans	22
Anglo-Indians	1
Hindus other than Scheduled Castes	60
Muslims	22
Other Minority Communities	8
Scheduled Castes	1
II. Non-Gazetted Posts :	
Europeans	3
Anglo-Indians	3
Hindus other than Scheduled Castes	445
Muslims	149
Other Minority Communities	52
Scheduled Castes	1

(b) The reply to the 1st part is in the negative. With regard to the second part, I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to Home Department Resolution No. 23/5/42-Ests. (S), dated the 11th August, 1943, under which 8 1/2, per cent of all vacancies to be filled by direct recruitment are to be reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates and certain concessions in regard to age limit and fees have been granted to such candidates. Vacancies are advertised in important newspapers for the information of all candidates.

(c) No. According to the orders issued under the Home Department Resolution, to which I have referred, a minimum standard of qualifications has

to be prescribed in all cases and the reservation of vacancies for members of Scheduled Castes is subject to this condition.

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Hardships suffered by Tenants in Old Delhi and Shahdara

191. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali : (a) Is the Honourable Member for Labour aware of the hardships suffered by the tenants in Old Delhi and Shahdara ?

(b) Are Government aware that some rich landlords have increased the rent by 150 per cent during the last two years and in spite of the applications of the Punjab Urban and Rural Act ?

(c) Is it a fact that some landlords have cut off water connections and electric connections with a view to bring pressure on tenants to vacate the premises or increase the rent ?

(d) Do Government propose to extend to Old Delhi and Shahdara the provisions of Rent Control Act lately applied for protection of New Delhi tenants ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes, generally.

(b) and (c). I am aware that increases in rent have taken place, but under the Punjab Urban Rent Restriction Act, 1941, these are matters for the decision of the courts.

(d) There are administrative difficulties in the extension of the New Delhi House Rent Control Order, 1939. to the areas in question but the Government of India have other measures under consideration.

189

Irregularities reported under Payment of Wages Act against East Indian Railway

54. Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the nature of irregularities reported by the Inspector under the Payment of Wages Act against the East Indian Railway since 1938, and the action taken thereon by the Government, by the Railway Board and by the Railway Administration, respectively ? If no action has been taken, what are the reasons therefor ?

(b) Have any of these irregularities been repeated in reports from year to year ?

(c) What action has been taken on the irregularities referred to in part (b) ? If not, why not ?

(d) What are the reasons for not taking proceedings under the Payment of Wages Act against the Railway Administration for the repetition of irregularities ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b) Information is being obtained and will be placed on the table of the House in due course.

(c) The irregularities detected were brought to the notice of Railway Administration for rectification.

(d) Government does not consider it necessary to proceed formally under the Act when satisfactory settlement in individual cases can be otherwise achieved.

190

Technical Experts Recruited for Training of War Technicians

222. **Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please slate the number of technical experts recruited by the Government of India for the training of War Technicians ? What is their monthly emoluments including salary and other allowances ?

(b) What is the total number of centres of War Technicians, and how many of these are in close association with Engineering Colleges and Railway Workshops?

(c) How many of these expert Instructors are posted in War Technician Centres associated with Engineering Colleges and Railway Workshops ?

(d) Now that the Indians have already been trained, can these Instructors be more usefully employed elsewhere ?

(e) Is it a fact that these expert Instructors have also been allotted a duty of inspecting other centres in addition to teaching work ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Apparently the reference is to British Specialist Instructors.

100 British Specialist Instructors were recruited, of whom 87 are now in service. Their emoluments range between Rs. 620 and Rs. 872 per month with free furnished quarters or lodging allowance in lieu plus conveyance allowance in suitable cases. (b) total number of training centres under the technical

Training Scheme	270
Centres in Engineering Colleges	12
Centres in Railway Workshops	27

(c) 10 in each.

(d) In the opinion of Government they cannot be more usefully employed than in connection with the training of technicians.

(e) Yes, in a few cases.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Has any centre been established in Karachi ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I want notice.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that these expert instructors who are deputed to centres associated with Engineering Colleges or workshops have got additional duties of inspecting centres which have been established outside these institutions.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As I said, yes, in a few cases.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : May I know if these experts who are associated with Engineering Colleges are subject to the discipline of Government or are associated with other members of the staff of the college concerned ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I want notice.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : Are the Government aware of this fact that these experts who are associated with Engineering Colleges do not consider themselves to belong to the staff of the Engineering College and they do not consider that they are subject to the discipline to which members of the staff are subjected; are the Government aware of the fact that they spend a good deal of time in inspecting other institutions and they consider the teaching job to be unattractive, and they have no heart in their teaching work ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I will enquire into what my Honourable friend has said.

191

Strike in the Government of India Press

230. Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is or it is not a fact that as a result of great discontent among the employees of the Government Press, a strike took place on the 1st December, 1942, which was pacified by the visits of the Labour Secretary and the Labour Welfare Officer, to whom the major grievances were given by the workers ?

(b) What has been done by Government to remove their grievances especially about the following :

(i) the grant of dearness allowance to the Press employees on the lines of Railway rates;

(ii) the grant of casual leave to all the industrial employees; (iii) the levy of a uniform rate of five per cent house-rent on all the employees, irrespective of their date of occupation of Press quarters;

(iv) the revision of the numerous existing grades of pay of the employees of the Binding Branch into one time-scale of pay, so as to afford a living wage; and

(v) the grant of at least old scales of pay to all the employees of the Press ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) (i) and (iii) As the questions affected all services, the requests of the Press employees for separate treatment have not been acceded to. I may add that it was decided on the representation of the Press Workers that dearness allowance should not be included in calculating the rent payable by occupants of Government residences.

(ii) and (iv) Both the questions are at present under consideration. Steps are being taken to expedite a decision on them.

(v) This is not the opportune time to undertake a general revision of scales of pay. Such a revision can only be undertaken after the war in the light of post-war conditions.

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Promotion of Qualified Copy holders and Revisers as Readers in the

Government of India Presses

231. **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the case of amending the rule regarding the promotion of qualified copy holders and revisers as readers in the Government of India Presses, is pending consideration in the office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery, India, for more than 11/2 years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the views of all the Government of India Presses, their Works Committees and Workers Unions, were invited by the Controller of Printing and Stationery on the subject;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Controller of Printing and Stationery also suggested to postpone the Readership Examination for an indefinite period, i.e. till all the qualified men on the waiting list were absorbed as readers permanently;

(d) whether it is a fact that some qualified copyholders and revisers with more than fifteen years' service at credit have, according to the present rules, been rendered junior to those who have put in only four or five years' service, though all qualified together in the same examination;

(e) whether it is a fact that some who passed the Readership Examination in the year 1936, in the first attempt, have become junior to those who qualified after four years (in 1940), in the second attempt; and

(f) if the answers to parts (a) to (e) above be in the affirmative, whether the Honourable Member proposes to remove the anomalies of the rules, and to expedite the final decision of the case, so that the Readership Examination, due in May, 1944, in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, may not be postponed for want of decision; if not, what advantage is in view in keeping the decision in abeyance for so long ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a), (b) and (c) Yes. The delay in finalising the decision of Government on the points raised is due to the widely divergent views expressed by the different parties whose opinions were invited.

(d) Certain anomalies involved in the application of the rules have been brought to the notice of Government. Proposals to remove them are at present under the consideration of Government.

(e) The question does not arise. Appointments to the posts of readers are made by seniority and not by merit on the results of a qualifying examination.

(f) As stated in reply to (d) above, proposals regarding the amendment of the rules on the subject have been received and are under examination. It is hoped to issue orders well before the next readership examination in the Government of India Press, New Delhi (due in May 1944) is held.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether amendments to the New Delhi Rent Control Order announced on January 24th, 1944, are applicable, retrospectively, as was slated by his Joint Secretary, Mr. Mozumdar, at a Press Conference, the account of which was published in the New Delhi Statesman of January 27th ?

(b) Is he aware that these amendments are interpreted by the Delhi courts to apply retrospectively ?

(c) If the intention of Government was not to give these amendments retrospective effect, do they propose to issue a clarification of their intention, in view of the interpretation placed on them by the Delhi courts ? If not, why not ?

(d) Is he aware that a copy of the Gazette Extraordinary, dated the 24th January, in which these amendments were announced was privately handed over by his office to Mr. Shiva Rao, New Delhi correspondent of the Hindu, at a time when copies were not available to the public, to enable Mr. Shiva Rao to take advantage of it, in case of ejection which was pending in Delhi civil courts and judgement on which was to be announced on January 25th ?

(e) Is he aware that his Joint Secretary, Mr. Mozumdar, has issued orders that house No. 7 Barakhamba Road in which Mr. Shiva Rao resides as a tenant, should be requisitioned, in case Mr. Shiva Rao was ejected in pursuance of the decree if given in favour of his landlord by the civil court ? If these allegations are correct, does the Honourable Member propose to institute an enquiry in the alleged partiality of the Government servants ?

(f) Is it a fact that Mr. Mozumdar had issued orders that in the event of Mr. Shiva Rao being ejected, he should be provided with a three-roomed hutment by Government ? Do Government propose to provide similar facilities to other tenants in New Delhi ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No such Statement was made by Joint Secretary, Labour Department.

(b) We have no information on the subject.

(c) No. The interpretation of Statutes and Orders is a matter for the courts and not for Government.

(d) No. The allegation is incorrect.

(e) Yes, the order was passed because the house would, in the event mentioned, have fallen vacant and be available for use by Government. There is no question of Government requisitioning it for Mr. Shiva Rao. It is the policy of Government to requisition all available accommodation in Delhi that may fall vacant.

(f) **NO.**

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : What is the intention of Government ? Do they want to give it retrospective effect or not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The legal intention is always for

the Courts to interpret.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: The Courts will undoubtedly interpret, but what is the order of the Government ? Is it to have retrospective effect or is it only for the future ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is a matter which must be left to the Courts.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi** : Is it not a fact that landlords in Delhi are harassing their tenants in order to profiteer and what steps are Government taking to stop it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information that the landlords are harassing, but we had a deputation from the tenants who placed before Government certain complaints and the amendment of the New Delhi Rent Control Order was made to meet some of the grievances.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan : In this case the house owner is a retired Executive Engineer, Rai Bahadur Durgadas, who has a big family of 20 persons, whom he cannot accommodate anywhere else.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on the point.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Is it the intention of the Government to clarify the effect of any order passed if the Court feels any ambiguity ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not follow the Honourable Member's question.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether the Government propose to issue any clarification of their order passed regarding the applicability of its retrospectiveness to the Court ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Certainly, if there is any ambiguity it will be the duty of the Government to clarify it.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : Is the order very clear or does it require any interpretation ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I can supply a copy to my Honourable friend.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : My question is this : Is the order clear and unambiguous or liable to interpretations ? The Honourable member says that the Court will interpret it. The Court will undoubtedly do it but only in the latter case.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not know what my Honourable friend wants to convey.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai: My question is this. The Honourable Member said that order may be interpreted by the Court. But I say, is the order itself liable to interpretations, on which the Honourable Member says that it will be to the Court.....

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): That is an argument.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : I am putting the question.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Order, order.

Employment of Women for Underground Work in Collieries

701. **Mr. K. S. Gupta** : (a) Is the Honourable Member for Labour aware that Mr. Sorensen described the recruiting of women to work in coal mines in India as " most serious and retrograde step " ?

(b) Is it not a fact that the price of foodstuffs and other necessities of life have gone up four to five times the pre-war rates while wages in the majority of the collieries are now 50 per cent above the pre-war rates ?

(c) Is it a fact that women are allowed to work in coal mines because the required number of men are not available for working in the mines ?

(d) Is it not a fact that amenities for service in collieries are far below the requirements of workers, which forced the men workers to seek service elsewhere for pay and prospect far superior to those of collieries ?

(e) Is it not a fact that women are prohibited from working in collieries and for services underground (i.e., mines other than coal) in the United Kingdom and the United States ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) I have seen press notices to this effect.

(b) I have no precise information regarding the rise in the cost of living in the coalfields compared with pre-war. Foodstuffs are provided for coalminers at concession rates. (c) Yes.

(d) There is evidence that coalmining Labour sought service on military works in the neighbourhood of collieries in preference to working in coalmines. As regards the amenities, I would refer the Honourable Member to part (c) of my reply to his question No. 273 on the 1st March, 1944.

(e) Women are not allowed to work underground in the United Kingdom. Women are, however, employed in some surface work in collieries. I have no information regarding the United States.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether it is a fact that the price of rice in pre-war days was 12 seers to the rupee and the present price charged in the coal areas for miners is 6 seers to the rupee ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have no precise information on the point.

Employment of Women for Underground Work in Collieries

702. **Mr. K. S. Gupta** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether the shortage of coal is the reason for the Government of India to lift the ban on women working underground ? If so, have Government taken into consideration that the price of human life is more precious than the production of coal ?

(b) Does the Honourable Member know that such permission would not be tolerated for a moment in England or elsewhere ?

(c) Is it not a fact that decent conditions of life and adequate wages are not available for workers in the Indian collieries ?

(d) Is it not a fact that scientific extraction of coal is not available in India as in the United Kingdom and the United States of America ? (e) Does the Honourable Member know that subsidence of earth and explosions of coal gas are more frequent in Indian collieries than elsewhere for want of adequate precautions and existence of primitive methods adopted in extraction of the ore ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: (a) The answer to both parts of the question is in the affirmative.

(b) Women are not allowed underground in coalmines in Great Britain. I have no information regarding other countries.

(c) As I stated in answer to the Honourable Member's Question No. 274 on the 1st March, 1944, working conditions in mines have not been very satisfactory. Every effort is being made to see that conditions of life are improved and that adequate wages are paid.

(d) Mechanisation in Indian coal mines is not so far advanced as in the United Kingdom and the United States.

(e) Collapses or subsidence are not more frequent in Indian mines than in other countries where the coal seams are near the surface. Gas explosions are not so frequent in Indian mines as in coalmines of most other countries. Safety precautions taken in this country compare favourable with those adopted in any other country.

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Closing of Openings in D.L.Z. Area Squares, New Delhi

704. Sardar Sant Singh : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the reasons for which openings on the comers and in the middle of the various squares in the D.L.Z. area in New Delhi were closed ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The reason for closing the passages was to prevent people from committing nuisance on them. This action was taken at the suggestion of the Public Health Department.

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Labour Unrest in Karachi Port Trust

715. Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if his attention has been drawn to the memorandum issued by Kazi Mohamed Mujtaba, General Secretary, Sind Provincial Trade Union Congress, under the heading " A few facts about the Labour unrest in Karachi Port Trust " ?

(b) Is it a fact that 2,384 workers of the Karachi Port Trust have demanded the appointment of an adjudicator to look into their demands ?

(c) Is it a fact that the Labour Welfare Officer of the Government of India had made certain recommendations after his visit to Karachi in July, 1943 ?

(d) If the reply to the above is in the affirmative, what action have

Government taken or propose to take in the matter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member, for War Transport has agreed to answer this question.

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Proposed Conversion of Civil Pioneer Force into Auxiliary Pioneer Force

717. Mr. **Piare Lall Kureel:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government intend to convert the Civil Pioneer Force into the Auxiliary Pioneer Force ; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) be in the affirmative, when do Government propose to convert the Civil Pioneer Force into the Auxiliary Pioneer Force, whether during or after the War ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No. (b) Does not arise.

199

Pay of Pioneers in Civil Pioneer Force

718. Mr. **Piare Lall Kureel :** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state if it is a fact that the pay of a pioneer in the Civil Pioneer Force is Rs. 15a month only ?

(b) Does the Honourable Member consider the present pay of a pioneer adequate under the present economic condition of the country ?

(c) Do Government propose to increase the pay of the pioneers as they have done in case of soldiers in the Indian Army ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The basic rate of pay of a Pioneer in the Civil Pioneer Force is Rs. 15a month. If he is serving in a war area where a similar allowance is admissible to members of the Defence Services, he is allowed *batta* at the rate of Rs. 3-8-0 per month.

(b) Considering that a Pioneer in addition to his pay is provided with free rations, free accommodation, free uniform and equipment, the pay is adequate.

(c) The matter will be considered in respect of persons employed in a War Area.

200

Non-Payment of Allowance to Tailors in Civil Pioneer Force

719. Mr. **Piare Lall Klireel :** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state whether clerks, sweepers and washermen, attached to the Second Unit of the United Provinces Civil Pioneer Force get Rs. 5 each as allowance per month ?

(b) If the answer to the part (a) above be in the affirmative, why is the same allowance not given in the case of tailors attached to the said Force ?

(c) Does the Honourable member propose to remedy the grievances of the tailors in this respect ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Owing to the difficulty of

recruiting barbers, washermen and sweepers, Provincial Governments are allowed to grant those categories special trade allowance in accordance with the situation in the provinces in respect of each of the categories up to a maximum of Rs. 5 per month. It is open to the Provincial Governments to recommend a trade allowance in respect of categories other than those referred to above, including tailors.

(b) No recommendation has been made by the Government of the United Provinces for any special allowance being granted to tailors.

(c) The Government of India do not consider that any action is necessary.

201

Applications under Payment of Wages Act against Illegal Deductions, etc. by Railway Administrations

222. **Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the number of applications in each year presented by persons referred to in Section 15 (2) of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, respectively, to the Authority since the 1st April, 1938, for directions against illegal deductions and delayed payment, respectively, by the Railway Administrations separately ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Government have no information regarding the number of applications presented by railway employees under section 15 (2) of the Payment of Wages Act. The collection of the information required will involve an amount of Labour which will not be justified by the results achieved.

202

Cases of Infringement of Hours of Work for Railway Employees not covered by Factories Act

223. **Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the number of cases of infringement of the Hours of Work for employees on Railways not covered by the Factories Act since 1931, and the action taken thereon ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Information is being obtained and will be placed on the table of the House in due course.

203

Functions and Duties of Central Electricity Board, etc.

224. **Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the functions and duties of: (i) the Central Electricity Board, (ii) the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Board, and (iii) the Central Electric Power Control Board ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (i) The Central Electricity Board is the authority set up under section 36-A of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, for making rules under Section 37 of that Act.

(ii) The Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Ltd., is a private company and acts as a Central Organisation in Delhi Province for the generation or

purchase in bulk of electric energy and for its distribution to bulk consumers, i.e. those who undertake to consume or to pay for not less than 5,00,000 units per annum. (iii) The functions of the Central Electric Power Control Board are :

(a) to advise the Government of India regarding any measure of control to be applied to the supply of electricity by any public electricity supply undertaking;

(b) to administer such control, as may have been approved by the Government of India in the case of any public electric supply undertaking and, in particular, to issue permits for new supplies of electricity or for restriction of existing supplies in accordance with the general principles laid down by the Government of India;

(c) to collect such information from public electricity supply undertakings as it considers necessary in order to be in a position to advise Government regarding the necessities of control and as to the areas in which surplus electric power is likely to be available; and

(d) to collect such information as may be required to assist in co-ordinating the development and utilisation of electric power on the best lines in furtherance of the general interests of the war effort and industrial development of India.

204

Electricity Charges paid by Consumers in Shahdara, Delhi

225. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state :

(a) if it is a fact that (i) the Central Electricity Board, (ii) the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Board, and
(iii) the Central Electric Power Control Board have supervision, power and control on the supply of electric to Shahdara town;

(b) if it is a fact that the Pitkeathly Report recommended a uniform charge for current consumption within the Province of Delhi;

(c) if it is a fact that the licence granted to the Upper Jumna Valley Electricity Company, Limited, for distribution of current to Shahdara town was on a date before the Pitkeathly Report; if so, the reasons for not amending the licence on the recommendations of that Report and reducing the charges from annas-/6/- per unit to annas-/4/- per unit; and

(d) whether Government propose to give the licence for distribution to a company whose service will be less expensive by inviting tenders; if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Assuming that the Honourable Member's reference to the supervision, power and control on the supply of electricity to Shahdara town, is in regard to the conditions and rates of supply, the authorities mentioned are not responsible in the matter.

(b) No.

(c) First Part—Yes. Second Part—The Report did not recommend that the licence be amended.

(d) Until such time as it is found possible to give a supply of energy to the Shahdara licensee from the Central Power House in Delhi, the rates which the Shahdara licensee is charging (and which are within the terms of his licence) cannot be regarded as excessive, and there can be no question of giving a second distribution licence to any person for this area.

205

Electricity Charges paid by Consumers in Shahdara, Delhi

226. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please slate :

(a) if it is a fact that the Upper Jumna Valley Electricity Company, Limited, pays the United Provinces Government for the supply at annas -/2/6 per unit;

(b) if it is a fact that the said Company charges the consumers of Shahdara town at annas -/6/- per unit;

(c) at what rate the Company calculate the operating charges; and (d) the number of consumers in each year from 1939, together with the amount of expenditure in each year for the maintenance of services by the said Company?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b) Yes.

(c) Government have no information.

(d) A statement giving the number of consumers is appended. The expression " expenditure for the maintenance of services " is not sufficiently definite to enable any figures to be given.

	Number of Consumers
Year ending 31st March 1939	114
Year ending 31st March 1940	118
Year ending 31st March 1941	131
Year ending 31st March 1942	141
Year ending 31st March 1943	143

206

The Factories (Second Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Factories Act, 1934 (Second Amendment).

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The question is:

" That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Factories Act, 1934 (Second Amendment)." The motion was adopted. The Honourable

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

207

Closing of Arehes between Quarters on Irwin Road, New Delhi

771. **Mr. Muhammed Azhar Ali** : (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that sometime back some of the passengers (arehes) in between the Government quarters situated on the Irwin Road, New Delhi, were closed for vehicular traffic, etc.?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that some of these have been closed by erecting small pillars of cements and others by putting up a revolving iron bar gate fixed in a ' V ' type of structures ?

(c) What is the object and utility of putting up these iron bar gates when ' V ' type of structures can easily Block the way for vehicular traffic ?

(d) Is the Honourable Member further aware that children while playing get hurt—sometimes very seriously—by these iron bar gates ?

(e) Does the Honourable Member propose to consider the desirability of getting these iron gates removed immediately and have them utilised in some other way? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(d) To stop cycle traffic.

(e) No.

(e) Government will be prepared to consider the suggestion of the Honourable Member.

208

Absence of Muslim Officers in Central Stationery Office

773. **Mr. Muhammad Nauman** : (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that none of the officers in the Central Stationery Office is a Muslim ?

(b) Is it also a fact that a new post of Assistant Controller, Stationery, has been recently sanctioned and has not yet been filled up ? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to reserve it for a Muslim ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The answer to the second part is that the post would be filled according to the communal representation rules.

209

Desirability of Posting a Technical Officer to the Office of Controller of Printing and Stationery

774. **Mr. Muhammad Nauman** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please say:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work in the Government of India Presses is of a technical nature;

(b) Whether it is also a fact that none of the officers at the headquarters' office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery is an officer drawn from the technical side; and

(c) if the replies to parts (a) and (b) are in the affirmative, whether he proposes to consider the desirability of posting a technical officer to the Controller's Office?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: (a) Yes, mostly.

(b) Yes.

(c) No, because detailed technical supervision and scrutiny of printing work is not necessary in his office.

210

Government Contribution to Indian Labour Federation

776. Mr. **Lalchand Navalrai** : (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state whether it is a fact that his Department makes a monthly contribution of Rs. 13,000 to the Indian Labour Federation through Mr. M. N. Roy. If so, for what purpose ? If the amount of contribution is more or less than this figure, will the Honourable Member please state the correct figure ?

(b) Have any accounts been rendered for the money so contributed to the Indian Labour Federation ? If not, why not ?

(c) If the reply to first portion of part (b) above be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member please lay on the table of the House copies of such statements received for the last six months ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) A monthly grant of Rs. 13,000 is made to the Indian Federation of Labour for doing propaganda to keep up the morale of industrial Labour.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No. The accounts are subject to the same scrutiny as all public accounts and no useful purpose would be served by placing them on the table.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Is he authorised to distribute that money to other persons for the purpose of propaganda ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not given to him; the grant is made to the Indian Federation of Labour.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : That means, the person who is in charge of the Federation. Can he distribute that money to other people asking them to go and do propaganda ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information as to how the money will be distributed.

Mr. **Lalchand Navalrai** : Will the Honourable Member enquire into it because accounts have to be made ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The accounts are audited as all other public accounts are.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Does the Honourable Member know how this amount is shown to have been distributed ? Is it shown by the audit?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information, but the accounts are scrutinised in the same way as all other public accounts.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : Have the Federation made any rule and submitted the same to the Government, regulating the manner in which this grant should be spent ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on that.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Will the Honourable Member make an enquiry into it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If the Honourable Member will care to put a question, I will make enquiries.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : I do not know how accounts will be audited if there are no rules for distribution.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am sure that the public accounts officer must satisfy himself, that there are some rules according to which the money is spent.

Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande :** Are there any other associations which are getting money like this ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I must have notice of that question.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : There ought to be some rules by means of which it can be ensured that Mr. Roy does not spend the whole money on his friends.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I had no idea that the Honourable Member had any justification to presume that there were no rules.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : That is the impression which one gets, because Government showed ignorance.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Government have not shown ignorance. My answer was that the accounts are subject to the same scrutiny as other public accounts are.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari : Has the Honourable Member satisfied himself that this is the only organisation that will help the Government to keep up the morale of Labour ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information. I must have notice of that question.

Ejectment Cases in Delhi Courts

782. **Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the number of ejectment cases filed in Delhi Court since the extension of Punjab Rent Restriction Act to Delhi Province? How many have been disposed of and how many are still pending in Courts ?

(b) Is he aware that immediately after enforcement of the Punjab Rent Restriction Act in Delhi Municipal Area, landlords asked a number of tenants to vacate residential houses and flats for landlords' own occupation ? Are Government aware that a large majority of such claims was false and the

houses were let to the same or other parties on payment of Nazrana ?

(c) Will he be pleased to give instructions for enacting Control Orders throughout Delhi Province providing that no residential house or flat should be vacated so long as the tenant pays or is willing to pay controlled rent ?

(d) Is he aware that landlords in Delhi generally refuse to carry out repairs to their property since the enforcement of Control Orders ? If so, will he be pleased to state what steps he proposes to take to penalise the landlords for refusing to attend to their property ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar ; (a) The number of suits instituted upto the 28th of March 1944 was 1,444. Of these 888 had been disposed of and 556 were pending.

(b) Yes. I understand that the total authorities have received complaints to this effect.

(c) Government have certain measures under consideration.

(d) The total authorities have received some complaints and the matter is under consideration.

212

Publication of Railway Labour Supervisor's Annual Report

262. Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : With reference to the Honourable the Labour Member's reply to unstarred question No. 43, asked on the 10th February, 1943, in regard to the publication of Railway Labour Supervisor's annual report, will the Honourable Member ensure the publication of brief reports by way of press communiques for the information of interests concerned ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The Honourable Member presumably refers to the unstarred question No. 43, asked on the 10th February 1944.

The question of issuing Press Communiques on the annual reports of the Supervisor of Railway Labour, is under consideration of the Government.

213

Maintenance of Roads within Shahdara, Delhi

263. Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state the authority (Municipal Committee or Central Public Works Department) responsible for the maintenance in good order of roads within the Shahdara Lown, Delhi Province ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Notified Area Committee, Shahdara, is responsible for the maintenance of roads within the Shahdara Lown.

214

Applications under the Payment of Wages Act against Illegal Deductions, etc., on East Indian and North Western Railways

266. Mr. Ananga Mohan **Dam** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour

please state the number of applications from Railway employees for direction under the Payment of Wages Act, for the refund of deductions and for the payment of delayed wages made since March 1938, against the East Indian and North Western Railway Administrations, respectively, together with the result of the disposal of those applications. If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali's unstarred question No. 222 on 30th March 1944.

215

Government Contribution to Indian Labour

Federation

31. Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : (a) With reference to the reply to my starred question No. 776 given on the 4th April, 1944, will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether the sum of Rs. 13,000 given monthly to the Indian Labour Federation has been distributed amongst the President, Vice-Presidents and other office bearers of the Federation ? If so, in what proportion ?

(b) Has the Honourable Member looked into the audited accounts of the Federation to find out how this money has been utilised ? If not, why not ? If so, does he propose to place the audited accounts on the table of the House from the date the subsidy of Rs. 13,000 a month was paid up to this day ?

(c) Is it a fact that this question came up before the International Labour Conference, which met at Philadelphia in the form of the comparative representative character of the Indian Labour Federation and the All-India Trade Union Congress, and what was the decision of the Conference ? What has been decided for the future representation of the Indian Labour on the International Labour Conference to be given to an organisation not living on subsidy ?

(d) Have all the funds paid to the Indian Labour Federation been spent on the object for which they were given ? If so, will he give a brief account of the activities of the Federation in this respect ? If any part there of has not been used for the purpose for which it was granted, will the Honourable Member please take steps to have that much portion refunded to the Government ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The grant is made to the Indian Federation of Labour as an organisation and is not distributed among its several office bearers.

(b) and (d) (First part) Government are not concerned with the accounts of the Federation, but with the manner in which the Government contribution has been spent by the Federation. They are satisfied that although full and regular accounts are not available for the earlier period of the grant, this expenditure has achieved the objects for which it was sanctioned. With effect from the 1st June 1944 the accounts will be prepared in the Federation's office by a

qualified accountant, and these will be available to audit in the ordinary way.

(c) The grant was mentioned in an objection by the All-India Trade Union Congress made to the International Labour Office as regards the credentials of the workers' representatives in the Indian delegation. The Credentials Committee, in its report which was adopted by the Conference, asked the Conference to regard the Workers' delegate of India and his advisers at that session of the Conference as duly accredited. The Committee's report did not mention the grant but stated as follows :

" It does not doubt that the Government of India will continue its endeavours to make provision for the representation of both organisations in an appropriate manner at future sessions of the Conference and ventures to hope that the two organisations will reach an agreement, which will secure the effective participation in the International Labour Organisation of representatives of all sections of the Indian Trade Union movement. The Committee understands that, failing such an agreement, the Indian Workers' delegate to the next session of the Conference will be appointed in agreement with the All-India Trade Union Congress." (d) (Second part) The monthly grant is spent on publications of printed literature, oral propaganda, visual publicity and the disseminating of reassuring news.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I know the object for which the grant has been given ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The answer will be found in my answer to part (d) (second part). It states that the grant is spent on publication of printed literature, oral propaganda, visual publicity and the disseminating of reassuring news about war.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Are the Government satisfied that the money given by them has been spent on those items alone ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: Yes, they are satisfied.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know if the Government are aware that part of this money has been spent on anti-Congress propaganda ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They have no information.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will they inquire into the matter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have stated in my answer that with effect from the 1st of June, 1944, the accounts will be prepared in the Federation's Office by a qualified accountant and these will be available to audit in the ordinary way.

Sardar Mangal Singh : May I know whether this payment is made monthly or yearly ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no information on this point in front of me. I suppose it is made monthly.

Sardar Mangal Singh : Is it paid to the Secretary or the President ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: To some responsible officer of the organisation concerned.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know what is the subject of this propaganda and the subjects of the publications issued ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is pro-war propaganda and pro-war literature.

Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande** : Will the Honourable Member be prepared to place the audited accounts on the table of the House ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : When it is audited, it will be placed on the table and will be available to the Members in the ordinary way.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh** : What is the period covered for which there have been no accounts ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : For the earlier period; we have not got the exact accounts but we have now made arrangements that the accounts will be kept by an officer of the Audit Department.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : What was the amount ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am unable to give the figure.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Who is responsible for not keeping these accounts in the earlier period—the Honourable Member himself or the Government or they ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have not followed the question.

Mr Lalchand Navalrai: The Honourable Member said that for some period no accounts were kept.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have not said that no accounts were kept. What I said was:

They are satisfied that, although full and regular accounts are not available for the earlier period of the grant, the money has been spent in the manner in which the Government desired it should be spent.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai: Is the Government satisfied that the money has been spent properly ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to believe to the contrary.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : It is not a question of the Honourable Member believing to the contrary.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The Honourable Member is arguing.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : What evidence has the Honourable Member got for thinking that the money has been spent properly ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to believe to the contrary.

Mr. **Lalchand** Navalrai : My question was different. How is the Honourable Member able to believe one way or the other ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to believe that the amount was not spent regularly.

Sardar Sant Singh : May I know if it is only to the satisfaction of the

Honourable Member himself or does he take into account that the public has to be satisfied how the money has been spent / How has the Honourable Member satisfied the public ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : I do not know how I could satisfy the public but the Government which paid the money is satisfied.

Sardar Sant Singh : It is the tax payers' money that the Government is paying out. How is the Government going to satisfy the taxpayer that the money has been legitimately spent ?

(No Answer)

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : Was the Finance Member satisfied with the correctness of accounts ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That question might be addressed to the Honourable the Finance Member.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Who is the Secretary and who is the President of this Labour Federation ? Are they paid some salary or money from this fund ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It does not arise. If the Honourable Member will give notice, I will find out the information for him.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : May I raise a point of order ? Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad asked whether the Finance Member was satisfied and the Labour Member replied that the question might be addressed to the Finance Member. The Member in charge ought to know whether the Finance Member was satisfied or not. He must give the reply.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): He has given the reply. I cannot ask the Honourable Member to reply in a particular way.

216

Government Contribution to Indian Labour Federation

32. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : (a) With reference to the reply to my starred question No. 776 given on the 4th April 1944, will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether his attention has been drawn to a statement made by the President, Indian Labour Federation at Bombay in December last, at the 1st Annual Session of *the* Federation, that it was blackest lie that they were receiving Rs. 13,000 per month from the Government ?

(b) Has the Honourable Member's attention been also drawn to a statement made by Mr. Jamnadas Mchla, President of the Indian Labour Federation on his departure for Philadelphia to attend the International Labour Conference meeting, denying the fact of Rs. 13,000 of the Government's subsidy ?

(c) Is it also a fact that this statement was made in reply to the Honourable the Labour Member's statement in the House on the 4th April 1944, confirming the fact that a sum of Rs. 13,000 was being given to the Indian Labour Federation ?

(d) Is it a fact that the subsidy of Rs. 13,000 is secretly paid to Mr. M. N. Roy ? If so, why is it paid to this particular individual and not to the Indian Labour Federation ?

(e) Will the Honourable Member please make a brief statement as to the measures taken by the Indian Labour Federation during the period it has been in receipt of the monthly subsidy to achieve the object, e.g., to assist the Government in maintaining the Labour morale ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a), (b) and (c) Government's attention has been drawn to the statements referred to. From the very beginning the arrangement has been with the Indian Federation of Labour and not with any individual. The attention of the Federation was drawn to Mr. Mehta's statements and in reply the Federation has reaffirmed the fact that the arrangement is with the Federation.

(d) As already stated in reply to the preceding question, the grant is publicly made to the Indian Federation of Labour and not personally to Mr. M. N. Roy.

(e) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to my reply to the second part of part (d) of the preceding question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : The Honourable Member has stated in his reply that the money was given and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, before he went to Philadelphia, made a statement that the money was not given. How does the Honourable Member reconcile this inconsistency ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not for me to reconcile the two statements.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : Is the Honourable Member correct or not in having made the statement ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not for me to answer that question.

Sardar Sant Singh : May I know who is telling this blackest lie, either the Federation or the Government of India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My Honourable friend is free to draw any conclusions that he likes.

217

Removal after the War of Temporary Buildings Constructed in New Delhi

50. Sir F. E. James : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if he is aware :

(i) that Tord Linlilhgow in reply to the farewell address presented by the New Delhi Municipal Committee on the 16th October 1943, made the following statement :

You express anxiety about the removal after the war of the many temporary buildings which must be admitted to mar the beauty of the city. As I announced in my recent-speech to the Houses of the Legislature it is the

definite policy of the Government of India to remove those buildings as soon as possible. It is the intention that all the temporary buildings that have been constructed for use as offices and hostels, etc., in the neighbourhood of the Secretariat, in the Irwin Stadium, near the Willingdon aerodrome, in the neighbourhood of Connaught Circus and in various Blocks, which under the New Delhi Development Scheme had been allotted for other purposes, will be removed as soon as possible after the cessation of hostilities.

(ii) that His Excellency Lord Wavell in reply to the welcome address presented by the New Delhi Municipal Committee on the 30th October 1943, made the following statement :

I can assure you that Her Excellency and I are at one with you in the matter of the removal after the war of temporary buildings. You will recollect that Lord Linlithgow gave you an assurance on behalf of the Government of India.

(b) To what buildings do the intentions of the Government of India as announced by Lord Linlithgow now apply, in view of the construction programme undertaken, since October, 1943 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) To all buildings that are of temporary construction and that will interfere with the future development of Delhi. It does not apply to the Todi Road Officers bungalows constructed in 1941 or to most of the clerks quarters constructed recently. In particular it does not refer to the large Block of clerks quarters under construction to the south of Todi Road behind the observatory.

Sir F. E. James: May I know, Sir, who will decide whether the temporary buildings now being constructed will or will not interfere with the development of Delhi ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Obviously the Government of India.

Sir F. E. James : May I also enquire if those buildings which he has referred to in his answer, which are not included in the term ' temporary ' buildings, are, in fact, being constructed on a permanent basis and at a standard of quality which will justify their being retained as permanent buildings ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** Certainly.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member whether he considers that all the palatial buildings which have been built for Americans also mar the beauty of the city ? Are they temporary, and will they be removed after the cessation of hostilities ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That does not arise out of this question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : It does. These buildings—such as those built near the Council House—also mar the beauty of the city.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The question did not refer to the buildings built for American troops.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai : All these buildings are being constructed by Government.....

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The question does not refer to the buildings built for American troops. Therefore the question does not arise.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : Next question.

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Government Contribution to Associations other than Indian Labour Federation

59. Mr. Badri Dutt Pande : (a) With reference to starred question No. 776 of the 4th April 1944, regarding monthly grant of Rs. 13,000 to the Indian Federation of Labour, will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to give a reply to my supplementary question as to whether there are other Associations which are getting money like the said Federation ?

(b) What is the Government control over this money to see that it is being utilised for public purposes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No other Labour Association has received Financial assistance from Government for this purpose. The letter in which assistance from Government in the matter of propaganda for maintaining morale of Labour was offered, was addressed both to the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Indian Federation of Labour. In their reply the All-India Trade Union Congress did not ask for any assistance.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to the replies already given to questions put by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.

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*** Unconstitutional Conduct of Government in Appointing Adjudicator in Trade Dispute between Shahdara (Delhi) Saharanpur Light Railway and its Employees, etc.**

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The next motion stands in the name of Mr. Dam. He wishes to discuss " the unconstitutional conduct of the Central Government in the appointment of the adjudicator in the trade dispute between the Administration of the Shahdara (Delhi) Saharanpur Light Railway and its employees and further failure of the Central Government in not extending the order on the award of the said Adjudicator to the employees on the East Indian Railway by making cheap grains available at the rates charged by the North Western Railway as made available to the employees on the Shahdara (Delhi) Saharanpur Light Railway ".

What is the exact complaint ? Does he want that there must be some sort of allowances which have been awarded elsewhere ?

Mr. Ananga Mohan **Dam** (Surma Valley *cum* Shiltong: Non-

Muhammadan) : Sir, the rule says that both parties to the dispute should apply for a reference to the court. That was done and the privileges that were extended to the employees of the North Western Railway were not extended to the employees of the East Indian Railway as regards the cheap grains that were made available to them.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : You want the same privileges to be extended to the employees of the East Indian Railway.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Yes, Sir.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I oppose the motion and I must say that my Honourable friend is considerably misinformed as to the facts and the circumstances. This adjudication look place under Rule 81 A.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim): The only question before the House is whether the motion is in order.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am stating the facts. This adjudication look place under Rule 81 A of the Defence of India Rules and the power to appoint an Adjudicator completely vests in the Government of India. Therefore there is nothing unconstitutional in the Government of India appointing an Adjudicator to settle this dispute particularly when the dispute covered a railway which runs in two provinces, namely, the United Provinces and Delhi and no single Provincial Government was entitled to appoint an Adjudicator. Therefore, I submit there is nothing unconstitutional in the action taken.

With regard to the second part, my submission is that my Honourable friend is considerably misinformed on the point because the award of the Adjudicator did not exclude any dispute with regard to the other Railway. It was certainly not open to the Government to extend the provisions of the award to a railway which was not the subject-matter of the dispute at all. The dispute concerned only the Shahdara (Delhi) Saharanpur Light Railway and not the East Indian Railway.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : There was no such demand on behalf of the employees of the East Indian Railway ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Certainly not. Sir.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdul Rahim) : The facts stated by the Honourable Member for Labour show that there is no justification for this motion. Therefore, it is disallowed.

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Expenditure on Buildings in Delhi

132. Dr. Sir **Zia Uddin Ahmad** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state how much money have the Government of India spent on buildings—permanent and temporary—in Delhi ?

(b) How much was provided by (i) loan, (ii) revenue, and (iii) by land and lease arrangements ?

(c) What would happen to these buildings after the war ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The total cost of permanent and temporary, office and residential accommodation, constructed since 1939, is Rs. 6.38 crores.

(b) The information asked for is not readily available.

(c) Permanent buildings will be retained after the war. As regards temporary buildings, it is the intention of Government to demolish them as soon as practicable after the war, as and when the sites are required for the development of Delhi.

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Demolition of Temporary Buildings

133. **Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** (a) Has the Honourable the Labour Member suggested to his Department that the buildings will be constructed in a manner that they may be pulled down soon after the war which will involve additional expenditure of the money ?

(b) Are the Government contemplating to demolish temporary buildings ? What would be the cost of demolition and what would be the manner in which these buildings will be pulled down ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) No. The primary object of the buildings is to meet war requirements and they have been constructed in a manner and on sites most suitable to meet such requirements. This has involved in most cases temporary construction on sites which will be required for other purposes after the war. The actual order of demolition of the buildings must depend on the programme laid down for the utilisation of the sites and the development of Delhi.

(b) Yes. It is not possible at present to estimate the cost of demolition and to lay down the manner in which the buildings will be pulled down.

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Accommodation Constructed in Delhi and New Delhi

135. **Sir F. E. James :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) for how many officers and staff (i) office, and (ii) residential accommodation has been constructed in Delhi and New Delhi by the Central Public Works Department since the beginning of the War;

(b) the total cost of (i) the temporary, and (ii) the permanent accommodation so erected;

(c) what temporary office and residential accommodation is now under construction and at what estimated cost;

(d) whether any further temporary construction is under consideration, and, if so, for what purpose; and

(e) what plans are being made for the removal of the temporary constructions after the war, and for the disposal and utilisation of the materials employed in their erection ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Since the beginning of the war the construction of office accommodation to the extent of 12,24,516 sq. ft. and roofed residential accommodation for 969 officers and 745 clerks has been completed. These figures do not include accommodation provided for the Far Eastern Bureau of the British Ministry of Information, the South East Asia Command and the U.S.A. Forces. Information regarding the number of officers and staff for whom the office accommodation has been constructed is not readily available.

(b) The total costs of office and residential accommodation, constructed since 1939, are (i) Rs. 5.29 crores. for temporary accommodation and (ii) Rs. 1.09 crores for permanent accommodation.

(d) A statement containing the required information and also information regarding permanent accommodation under construction is placed on the table of the House. (d) No further proposal has as yet been approved.

(e) It has been decided to remove the temporary buildings as soon as possible after the War. The question of the disposal and utilisation of the materials is under consideration.

Statement of temporary and permanent office and residential accommodation now under construction and their estimated cost

Description of accomodation	Estimates Cost –Rs.
1. Additional residential accommodation for G.H.Q. Signals Officers.	Not readily available
2. 1000 Single Clerks Quarters at Kitchener Road	2341000
3. Accommodation for 367 clerks at Asmara and Masawa Lines (by alteration of existing temporary buildings).	
4. 68 married clerks' and 224 single clerks' quarters in Tibbia College, Hostel Compound.	2100000
5. Accommodation for 200 single officers in existing Government Hostels.	780000
6. Hostel for 160 married officers on King Edward Road	Not readily available
7. Office accommodation of 3,05,043 sq. ft.	3965559
I – Permanent -	
1. 50 ' D ' type and 168 ' E ' type clerks' quarters on Railway land near Minto Road.	2367386
2. 2,468 clerks' quarters on Todhi Road	29400000
3. 228 married clerks' quarters in 12 acres of land in Karol Bagh	3200000
4. 8 ' E ' type clerks' quarters in Aram Bagh	80000
5. Three-storeyed flats for 120 clerks on Chitra Gupla Road	1500000

Creation of Central Technical Power Board

139. Mr. **K. C. Neogy** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any plans for the creation of a Central

Technical Power Board;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Chairmanship of this Board has been offered to a former employee of the British Firm of Messrs. Merz and Melellan and that one of the two seals on the Board has been filled by an American Engineer;

(c) whether his attention has been drawn to reports that Government are considering the appointment of Messrs. Merz and Melellan, and the American Bond and Share Company as consulting engineers; and, if so, whether they are true.

(d) whether these two American and British firms, respectively, have acquired any interest in the erection or operation of electrical undertakings in India so far, and what they are;

(e) whether it is a fact that a Committee of leading Power Engineers appointed by Government early this year have reported that India would require electrical plant to the value of Rs. 400 crores, and that Government have accepted this recommendation; and

(f) whether Government would publish full details of the recommendations of the above-mentioned Committee ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes, but in the case of the former he has for the last three years and nine months been in the service of the Government of India as Electrical Commissioner.

(c) Government have seen certain press reports to this effect but they are not correct as they have not yet taken into consideration the question of appointing consulting engineers.

(d) In so far as Messrs. Merx and Melellan are concerned, the reply is in the negative. Government, however, understand that the Electric Bond and Share Company of U.S.A. (and not the American Bond and Share Company) which is a holding company has substantial interest in the Tata Hydro Electric Agencies and the United Eastern Agencies who are Managing Agents for the electric supply undertakings at Karachi, Broach, Nasik-Dcolali and Poona.

(e) No.

(f) Steps are being taken to public the proceedings of the Conference.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: When may we expect to see these recommendations ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I think in about a week's time.

Mr. Manu Subedar : With reference to part (c) of the question, can the Honourable Member give us some idea of the figure, if it is not 400 crores ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have not got the facts before me.

Government Contribution to Indian Labour Federation

152. **Prof. N. G. Ranga :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state, in reference to the Labour Department's letter No. L. 1882,

dated the 3rd March 1942 in which Mr. M. N. Roy's scheme for propaganda on the Labour Front, costing Rs. 13,000 per mensem was approved:

(a) whether Government have satisfied themselves that the said moneys have been spent according to the scheme;

(b) whether they have received any reports from Mr. M. N. Roy or his Labour Organisation on the manner of their utilisation;

(c) whether Government have drawn any conclusions upon their work and reports, if so, what they are, and whether they will be placed on the table of the House;

(d) whether there is any audit, and, if so, by whom;

(e) whether the audit report at least be placed on the table of the House;

(f) whether similar subsidies are being granted to any other individuals or organisations; if so, what they are, and what sums are being thus granted, and with what effects; and

(g) whether Government propose to continue these grants; and

(h) whether these grants are grants-in-aid and, if so, on what basis ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to part (d) of question No. 31 put by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai. (b) Yes.

(c) As already stated in reply to an earlier question. Government is satisfied that it has received adequate value for the money spent. The monthly grant is spent on the publication of printed literature, oral propaganda, visual publicity and the dissemination of reassuring news.

(b) and (e) This expenditure like all other expenditure is subject to Government audit and any comments made will appear in the Audit Report.

(f) No.

(g) Yes, it is the intention to continue for the present the grant made to the Federation.

(h) They are not grants-in-aid but represent payment for certain work carried out by the Association at Government's request.

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Paucity of Muslims in the Eastern Zone of Central Works Department

154. **Khan Bahaclur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Central Public Works Department has been bifurcated into Eastern and Western Zones ?

(b) Is it a fact that there is under recruitment of Muslims in all grades of service in the Eastern Zone ? If so, have Government taken any steps to redress this grievance ? If so, what ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) In the case of Subordinates, there was an under recruitment of

Muslims in the Eastern Zone and over recruitment of Muslims in the Western Zone, if these Zones are considered separate units. But there is no deficiency in the recruitment of Muslims in the Central Public Works Department considered as a whole.

In the case of Temporary Engineers there was over recruitment of Muslims in the Western Zone, and under recruitment in the Eastern Zone due to the fact that suitable Muslim candidates were not available in that Zone at the time the recruitment was made. This deficiency in the Eastern Zone will be made good gradually as suitable Muslims become available.

There is no deficiency of Muslims in any other grade either in the Eastern or in the Western Zone.

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Paper Annually supplied to Bureau of Public Information, etc.

39. **Bhai Parma Nand** : Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state the quantity of paper supplied in each year since 1941 to (i) the Bureau of Public Information, (ii) the Counter-Propaganda Directorate, (iii) Film Publicity, (iv) External Publicity and (v) Foreign Publicity?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As the question concerns the Labour Department I am answering it. The information as far as readily available is given in the statement below :—

Statement

Indentor	Tonnage consumed during 1-4-43 to 31-3-44	Tonnage consumed during 1-4-44 to 31-8-44
(i) Bureau of Public Information	162	55
(ii) Counter Propaganda Directorate	50	23
(iii) Film Publicity	Not Available	1
(iv) External Publicity	18	nil
(v) Foreign Publicity	99	17

Note.—(1) The figures prior to 1st April 1944 in the case of Film Publicity and 1st April 1943 in the case of the rest are not available. The figures relate to Financial Years.

(2) The figure shown against item No. (iv) above represents the consumption by the British Ministry of Information.

(3) The figures against items (iii) and (v) are in respect of the consumption of " Information Films of India " and " Publicity Officer (Foreign) " respectively.

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Statistics re Unemployed Labour

221. **Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh** : Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) if any statistics about unemployment labour in India is available; if so, what the number is, and how it is classified;

(b) if no statistics are available, when the Government intend to collect the

same and classify it according to industries and under the heads " educated " and " uneducated ";

(c) if the Government are aware that the United Nations are taking steps to maintain a high level of employment in their countries; and if so, when and what steps this Government intend to take to keep pace with them ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The answer to the first part is in the negative; the latter part does not arise.

(b) Government at present collect statistics about employment in certain industries and they propose to take steps to improve and expedite such statistics. It is not however possible at present to collect statistics about unemployment.

(c) Government are aware that some of United Nations are making plans to sustain a high level of employment even after the war. The reconstruction plans of the Government of India will also take into consideration the necessity of maintaining as high a level of employment as is available.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : May I ask if the Honourable Member is alert that in the post-war reconstruction he should see that every person in India should get an employment ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not follow the question.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member for Labour in the post-war scheme of reconstruction watch the interests of the labour and see that no person is out of employment ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That should be our ideal, I accept.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh:** What is the difficulty about the collection of statistics ? I thought I had said set this Department in motion by asking a question about statistics a year ago. May I ask if the work of the collection of statistics has not yet begun ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have just begun and I think we have made a good beginning.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh :** May I ask what had he been doing for the last one year ? When did he make a beginning ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We had many other things to do besides this. We have made a good beginning.

Prof N. G. Ranga : May I ask if early steps be taken to initiate the gathering of statistics about unemployment in different industries ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have already said that we have initiated the policy of collecting statistics.

Mr. **Govind V. Deshmukh :** May I know if anything has been done in carrying out the promise made to me last time in collecting statistics ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have already said a beginning has been made.

239. Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the employment of women underground is against the Geneva Convention accepted by the Government of India ?

(b) Is Government aware that no such employment has taken place in the United Kingdom in spite of the stress of war requirement ?

(c) When did Government make this relaxation, and why ?

(d) How long do Government expect to keep it open to employ women in coal mines ?

(e) How many women are so employed ?

(f) What is the wage earned by women underground, and how does it compare with the earnings of women employed in other trades ?

(g) What steps have Government taken to safeguard the health and morale of women underground in coal mines ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) August 1943 in the case of coalfields in Central Provinces and Berar, November 1943 in the case of Bengal and Bihar and December 1943 in the case of Orissa. Owing to severe shortage of male labour in these coalfields.

(d) The Government are most anxious to re-impose the ban as soon as the production of coal reaches a figure which makes possible such re-imposition.

(e) An accurate figure of the total number of women employed underground cannot be given as this figure varies from day to day. It is however estimated that about 16,000 women are at present employed underground in all coal mines in Bengal, Bihar, Central Provinces and Orissa.

(f) Women employed underground are entitled to the same wages as men on similar work. The wages of women employed underground vary from annas 0-12-0 to annas 0-15-0 a day exclusive of the free rice concession. Up-to-date information in respect of wages of women in other trades is not readily available.

(g) Women are not allowed to be employed underground in galleries which are less than 5 1/2 feet in height. They are also entitled to the benefits of the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941. For the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this Act and rules made thereunder, three Inspectors have been appointed. In addition, three Welfare Officers have also been appointed and a Lady Welfare Officer for mines is being appointed.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Has the Honourable Member seen the report in the United Kingdom about women in coal mines in which it is stated that no woman should work with any clothing above the waist-line ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

Mr. Manu Subedar : In view of this fact that neither in the United Kingdom nor in the United States of America, nor in any country in the British Commonwealth of Nations, are women employed underground in spite of the

stress of war, will the Honourable Member say why he has been a party to this humiliating practice ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : On account of the shortage of coal.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The Honourable Member slated that a woman is entitled to the same wage as a man and he said that a woman on an average gets twelve annas. I do not agree with your figure. In the coal-fields to the best of my knowledge a man and woman are paid jointly for joint production. How does the Government of India make sure what portion of the joint earning the man gives to the woman ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is easy to arrive at the figure by distributing the gang wages.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I again ask the Honourable Member how does he make sure that the woman gets the same wages as the man ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I said that a woman is entitled to the same wages as a man for the same work.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : How does he make sure that the man gives to the woman half the wage and does not take more for himself and give toss to the woman.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not know but I feel that the man and woman who work together are husband and wife and I wonder whether they would be very much interested in exact mathematical distribution of their joint wages.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : In view of the fact that the Honourable Member stated that he did not know, may I ask the Government of India to withdraw the statement which they have made that a woman is entitled to equal wage with the man. Is not the Honourable Member proclaiming that the woman is getting equal wage with the man ? Unless he can make sure how the woman can get equal wage with the man, he is not entitled to make a statement which in my judgement, is misleading.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is only a quibble on the part of the Honourable Member.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask whether the Government according to the assurance given by them during the last Session have reviewed the position and satisfied themselves that it is absolutely necessary for them to continue this cruel custom of employing women in mines ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Government have been reviewing the position.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir : May I know from the Honourable Member whether there is any restriction upon pregnant women going underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is very difficult to put any such restriction, because, as my Honourable friend is aware, it is extremely difficult to discover the state of pregnancy in many women.

Sir Cawasjee Jehangir : Surely the Honourable Member realises that it is not such a difficult matter. It is done in other trades. Why can't it be done here as well? Why can't a restriction be placed at least in theory, if not in practice, that no pregnant woman shall go underground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I might assure my Honourable friend that the matter is under active consideration.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Have the Government made any arrangement for the care of infants and children of these women workers ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : There has been established a Goal-miners' Welfare Fund and the care of children will be one of the duties of this Fund.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : I want to know whether the Government have made any definite arrangement for the care of the infants and children of these women ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That is a statutory organisation and one of its obligatory duties would be to look after the infants and children of the women workers.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : May I know whether Government have taken effective steps to reduce the number of women working in the mines and increase the number of men to be employed there ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That is also under consideration.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Are any steps being taken ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Steps are being contemplated.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh : Besides the statutory provision, do Government know of any arrangement that should be made to safeguard the welfare of these pregnant women and children ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am sure the Honourable Member will allow me to say that intelligence is not the monopoly of himself ?

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Neither is it the monopoly of the Government.

Shortage of Labour in Coal Mines

240. Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that shortage of labour in coal mines was due to higher wages offered by Army contractors for the construction of aerodromes, etc. ?

(b) What were the wages in coal mines before the war, and what have been the wages during each of the five years of the war ?

(c) Is it true that the falling off in the output of coal mines was due to the reluctance of coal mine-owners to pay proper wages, having regard to the rise in the cost of living ?

(d) What steps have Government taken to deal with the situation created by (i) shortage of labour, and (ii) shortage of coal ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Employment of labour at higher rates by Army contractors was a contributory cause of the shortage of labour in collieries;

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(c) It is a fact that wages of colliery labour were not for long sufficiently adjusted to meet the increased cost of living. This was one factor in the falling off of the supply of labour.

(d) I invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the replies given in the Legislative Assembly by the Honourable Member for Supply to parts (a), (b), (d), (e) and (f) of Mr. Neogy's starred question No. 17. This describes the various steps taken by Government to deal with the situation created by the shortage of labour and the shortage of coal.

The representatives of the industry also agreed at Dhanbad in December 1943 to increase the cash wages of colliery labour and grant concessions in the supply of foodstuffs.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What is the increase in wages that the employers are compelled to pay as compared with the pre-war rates.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am sorry I cannot give the figure but I have got a statement here which is pretty full and I am sure the Honourable Member will find what he wants there.

Mr. Manu Subedar : What steps have the Government taken to see that the women forced into the mines in this distressful manner get at least a little more pittance than women working in other trades above ground ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I can assure my Honourable friend that the wages in coal mines have increased by more than 50 per cent.

Mr. Manu Subedar : What steps have the Government taken to coerce the coal mine owners ? The Government pay for coal Rs. 9-8-0 now instead of Rs. 3-8-0 before the war. If you give so much more for coal, have you made any condition that this part of the extra will go to the women workers whom you have disgracefully forced into the mines ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I think we have taken all the steps necessary.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi :** Is it not a fact that the Government of India are taking measures to prevent miners being employed by military contractors in order that the miners may be forced to go into mines for work at the risk of being starved ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That does not arise out of this question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Do these 16,000 women possess any special qualification or skill so that they are thus forced to work in the mines, which qualifications could not be acquired by males in this country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They are neither asked nor forced. They are only permitted to offer themselves for their traditional occupation.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi** : May I know whether it is not a fact that the coal production today is less than the prewar period and whether this shortage of coal production is not due to the smallness of the wages paid to the miners ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My Honourable friend is entitled to draw his own inference.

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**Provincial Governments' Contribution to Radical Democratic Party
and Indian Labour Federation**

252. Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether office bearers or any individual of the Radical Democratic Party or of the Indian Federation of Labour receive monetary help from the different Provincial Governments besides Rs. 13,000 per month from the Central Government;

(b) whether he is aware that these two organisations receive a sum of Rs. 75,000 per month from the Government of the United Provinces;

(c) The object of the Government in giving monetary help to these two organisations only; and

(d) which the other labour organisations are which receive monetary help from the Government ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Government has no information. The grant of Rs. 13,000 is made not to the Radical Democratic Party but to the Indian Federation of Labour and not to any individual member or office-bearer of the Federation. The letter in which assistance from Government was offered was addressed both to the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Indian Federation of Labour. In their reply the All-India Trade Union Congress did not ask for any assistance.

(b) I am not aware of any grant made to the Federation by the Government of the United Provinces.

(c) This Department is concerned only with the grant to the Indian Federation of Labour. The object of this grant is to enable the Federation to do propaganda to keep up the morale of industrial labour.

(d) There are no other labour organisations receiving monetary help from the Central Government.

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**Exploratory and Prospecting Licences to British and American
Firms re Potential Oil Resources**

48. Mr. K. C. Neogy : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to lay on the table a statement bringing up-to-date the information supplied in the statement that was laid on the table on the 2nd August, 1943, relating to mineral concessions (including exploratory and prospecting licences) granted to British and American firms in respect of potential oil resources in British India ?

(b) Is it a fact that licences for carrying on geo-physical explorations have been granted by different Provincial Governments. If so, did the Provincial Governments concerned consult the Government of India before granting such licences ?

(c) To which firms have these licences been granted; in respect of which areas, and what are their terms ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : The information is being collected and a statement will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

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